

POGANUC PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

DISSOLVING VIEWS.



THE scene is a large, roomy, clean New England kitchen of some sixty years ago. There was the great wide fireplace, with its crane and array of pot-hooks: there was the tall black clock in the corner, ticking in response to the chirp of the crickets around the broad, flat stone hearth. The scoured tin and pewter on the dresser caught flickering gleams of brightness from the western sunbeams that shone through the network of elm-boughs, rattling and tapping as the wind blew them against the window. It was not quite half-past four o'clock, yet the December sun hung low and red in the western horizon, telling that the time of the shortest winter days was come. Everything in the ample room shone with whiteness and neatness; everything was ranged, put up, and in order, as if work were some past and bygone